have formed any groups to look into product development, suggest ways to improve airline service at the counters/airport/air punctuality etc.;

(b) if so, by when these groups are likely to submit their reports to Government;

(c) whether Government are also aware of the shortage of pilots/co-pilots as candidates available in the country prefer to work with foreign airlines; and

(d) if so, what action Government have taken to fill up the gap between demand and poor availability of pilots in the country?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI CM. IBRAHIM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. These are in-house Committees and their reports are not required to be submitted to the Government.

(c) and (d) At present there are sufficient number of professional pilot licence holders available in the country for employment as co-pilots. However, there is shortage of Commanders. Indian Airlines have commenced an accelerated time bound training programme to overcome the shortage of Commanders.

Unutilised financial assistance received from World Bank and ADB

2281. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) declined/threatened not to extend fresh financial assistance to India due to non-utilisation of funds already sanctioned by the above funding agencies;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as on 31st March, 1996 an amount of Rs. 57,000/- crore stands unutilised;

(c) what are the reasons for non-utilisation of funds already sanctioned by the said funding agencies; and

(d) the actions taken by Govemment to execute projects with the fund already sanctioned by die World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The unutilised external assistance on Govemment and Non-Government account as on 31.3.96 is Rs. 61,477,30 crore (Provisional).

(c) and (d) Foreign assistance is largely project tied and therefore, the utilisation of the sanctioned aid for any project is spread over the project implementation period. As a result, there would be undrawn aid balance at any point of time reflecting aid in pipeline, which will be absorbed as project implementation takes place. At present, World Bank and Asian Development Bank adided projects are in varying stages of implementation.

However, slower than expected utilisation of external assistance are due to funds constraints, procurement and contracting delays, delays in land acquisition and other project specific issues. Ensuring adequate provisioning for externally aided projects, release of ACA as 100% additionality, advance release of ACA to the States, standardisation of bidding documents and streamlining of procurement procedures, disintermediating on flow of external aid to Central PSUs, Portfolio Rationaltion and setting up of Project Management Unit in Department of Economic Affairs are some of the steps taken by the Government to improve aid utilisation.

Commissioning of All India Radio, Visakhapatnam

2282 SHRI SATYANARAYANA DRONAMRAJU: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal to commission Commercial Services of All India Radio, Visakhapatnam, which was promised during 1993-94 by the Government, was kept under cold storage;

(b) if not, the details thereof, and by when it is likely to be commissioned; and

(c) what is the estimated cost of the project?

THE MINISSTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CM. IBRAHIM): (a) to (c) No, Sir, A 10 KW FM Transmitter with additional playback studio facility is being established at Visakhapatnam for introduction of a Commercial Channel at an estimated cost